

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraphs 31, 38, and 51 of the specification as follows:

[0031] The circuit 38 is electrically connected to a controller schematically illustrated at 40. As described in greater detail below, the electric circuit 38 carries electric signals generated by the vehicle occupant sensing system 28 to the controller 40. The controller 40 is electrically attached to a restraint system, schematically illustrated at 42. The restraint system 42 can be of many types, such as an air bag system, and the controller 40 ~~controls~~ sends output to the restraint system 42 based on the signals delivered by the electric circuit 38. Although an airbag restraint system is discussed here, one having ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the type of restraint system 42 connected to the controller 40 does not limit the scope of the present invention.

[0038] Also, an annular void 72 is formed near the axial center of the base 50. In one embodiment shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, the sensor 46 is a Hall effect sensor attached to the circuit carrier 34 between each pair of tabs 32 of the tray 30. Electrical attachment between the sensor 46 and the circuit carrier 34 can be accomplished in the manner described in applicant's co-pending application, Serial No. 10/748,514, entitled "Vehicle Occupant Sensing System and Method of Electrically Attaching a Sensor to an Electrical Circuit," which is hereby incorporated in its entirety by reference. When the base 50 is attached to the tray 30, the annular void 72 provides clearance for the sensor 46.

[0051] Thus, the weight of an occupant will deform the seat cushion 16 such that the lower surface 20 of the lower seat cushion 16 pushes the upper slide member 52 toward the base 50. As the upper slide member 52 moves, the sensor 46 detects an increase in magnetic flux

density generated by the approaching emitter 104. In this way, the sensor 46 is operable to detect movement of the upper slide member 52 toward and away from the base 50. In turn, the sensor 46 generates a responsive signal indicative of the increase in flux density, and the controller 40 ~~controls~~ sends output to the restraint system 42 based on these signals. As stated, the guide surfaces 94, 100 direct the intermediate guide member 54 and the upper slide member 52 in a substantially axial direction. As such, an emitter 104 maintains a constant direction of travel relative to the sensor 56, thereby inhibiting the sensor 56 from obtaining false readings.